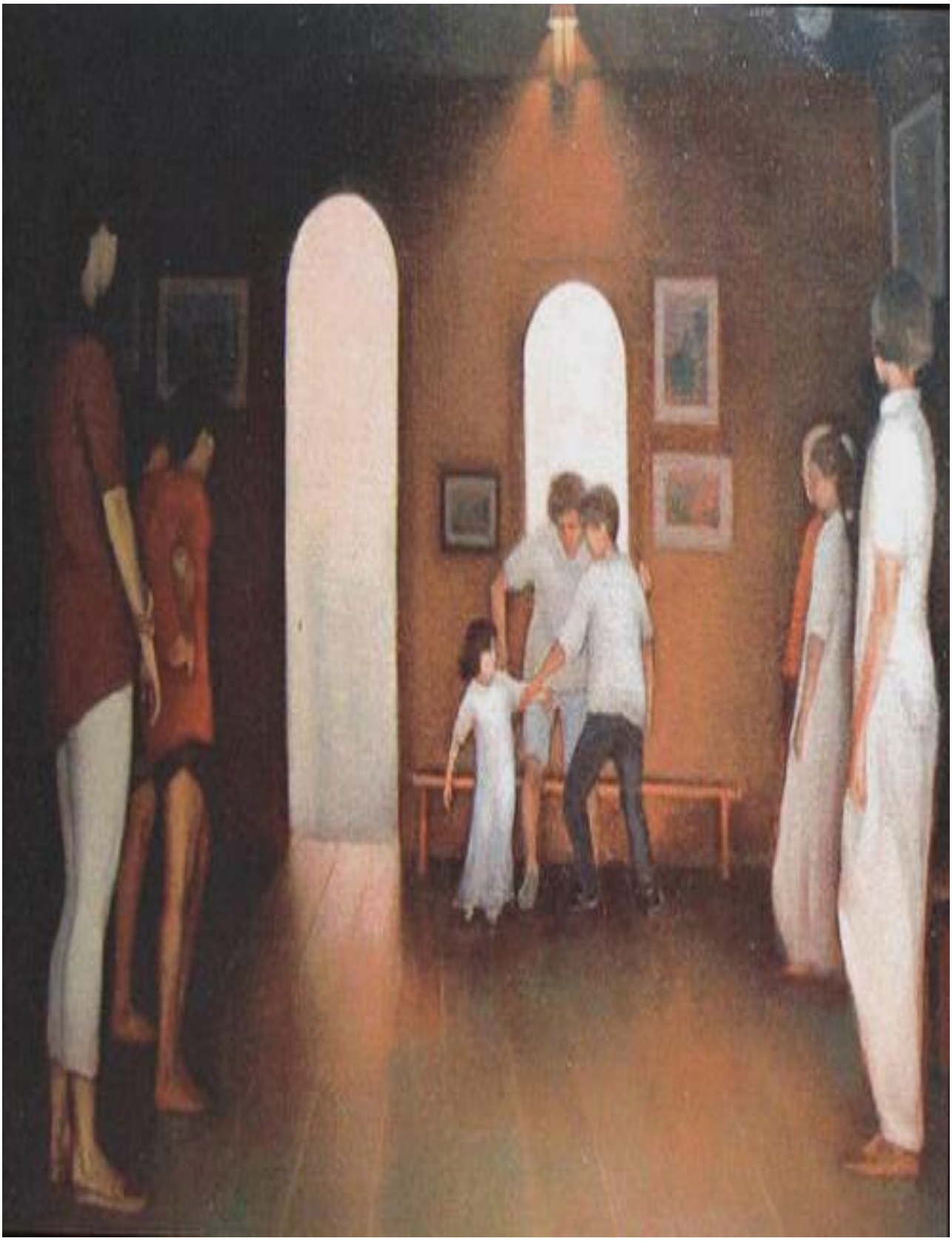

Critical Writing on Adam Fieled
2006-2012

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Learning to Dance, 2005
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Laura Goldstein on "Opera Bufa": moria (2008)

I was very fortunate to pick up a copy of *Opera Bufa* when I did. I went to see Andrew Lundwall and Daniela Olszewska read at Myopic books and was browsing the authors-who-have-been-here shelf before it started. I went upstairs and sat down. Andrew was late; he lives an hour or so outside of town. I started reading.

I don't know too much about opera, but I think that it would be a lovely experience in the spring, as is Adam's book, as is going to a good poetry reading, which is what I meant that I was fortunate to pick up a copy, right now, especially, when the spring is creeping in and melting up a bit of winter's hard and coldness. The book had some kind of similar effect on me, like music, as it is music, as it really is, and as it also uses as its larger metaphor.

The themes start and they start to mix. The way that they mix is the first part of the opera, a part which is sustained for a very large portion of the poem; so long, in fact, that I thought that was what the whole poem would be like. But it did change, and I very much appreciated that. I imagine that operas change partway through. I know our lives do. Adam writes, "as if you were a cup of finished ice-cream, I'd be a brown-eyed moon goddess"(11). Is this a good time to mention that I told Andrew after the reading that my favorite line of his was, "I want to eat some ice cream. I want to fuck my face with vanilla. Seems like it." Adam mentions right off that the rhythms are pitiless because we do not know how they began and this is a good example: "Rhythms become streams of possible shoe-lace, slugs of 3 a.m. Scotch, lust after thy neighbor's daughter, mooning on the lawn"(7) and later "You become gum"(36).

Adam latches onto rhythms that are already at play in the world and sifts into them his mix of observation, word play, conjecture, description, subversion and other games of linguistic and logic, testing out our frames of reference. Many sentences land themselves in a music of metaphor that made me keep wanting more. In this weird time of wanting to start a book that I see wing past my window on Goodreads or having guilt about setting one aside that I've already committed to publicly, it was just an absolute joy to want to keep reading and reading until I was finished. And, though I hate to admit this for fear that it reveals something about my attention span, this is rare.

Also related to spring, I felt very fortunate to be reading about so many actions that are happening outside from section to section, so much grass and color and even running along the Schuylkill, which makes me miss Philly in the springtime, too. In terms of the balance that Adam's creating in the book from section to section, he's bringing in a real record of the outside world to pour into his metaphors. This is not only a great springtime thing to think about, but also an important poetic for getting the poet outside of themselves. It was riveting to watch Adam's real-time reactions as he wrote the world into the opera, which must ultimately be sung with a voice.

Well what do I want to say about the end of the opera. The opera begins to end and then it begins to know it is ending and then it is ending and then it ends. At one point, at the very beginning of the ending as I saw it, Adam writes, "I only knew two scales, and I played them
every which way"(44) and then he writes, "I saw a thousand hues, and each was differently

used" (49) and how can they both be true? Well they are in this opera. In the first statement, he admits that his initial range might seem limited, but in the next he shows that what he observes in the world is much more multiple. Although a bounded being, external experience is what, looking back to the first statement, allows him to create real complexity with his writing. A writer has only so many words but each encounter is new and provides new materials, new ideas, and new combinations of thoughts and words. There's an attention that Adam is drawing to this paradox of language that poetry permeates as he draws his opera to a close. Perhaps one of the things about opera is that it transmits a vital energy; besides its mimetic purpose as theater, large swells of sound are projected with so much skill into the confined space of the hall. Within *Opera Bufa*, there is real life stirring inside the language as it finds a climax out of the constraints of its own conjuring.

I finished *Opera Bufa* while I was getting my hair cut, another spring thing, getting rid of the heavy mess of growth on my head that had gotten out of control over the winter. Now I feel lighter. I guess that when it's time to finish a book of really fine poetry, "it is the hour of feeling, when singing must cease" (59). Adam writes, "If only I felt that life, concentrated into song, could be fruit juice for thirsty joggers. Alas, it is not so" (62). Well, maybe I'm in an especially optimistic mood right now, but I disagree.

Stacy Blair on "Opera Bufa": Stoning the Devil (Loyola University) (2008)

Opera Bufa: "Divertimento Giocoso " or Coping with Absence?

Time, as a linear construction, tends to herd people into viewing their lives I in terms of memory, present sensual stimulation, and hypothetical premonitions. The English language reflects this structure by allowing us to speak in various verbal tenses, and narratives that employ multiple temporal settings can transport the reader or auditor into emotional states contingent upon a temporal location designated by the author. We construct our perceptions of the world based not only on language, however but also on images that elicit emotional responses and generate new thoughts or ideas. Memory works in a similar way, by cataloguing images corresponding to one's emotional and physical state in the past, like a physical stamp on one's brain that tries, then, to translate it into words. Memory, which can take such a strong hold on one's perception, depends upon loss for its own creation, such that one must lose something in order to look back on in it memory. Poets have long been tackling the problem of forgetting and memory, coping with grief, mourning lost lovers or friends, and feeling out the concept of nostalgia through their work. In *Opera Bufa*, Adam Fieled builds an entire opera out of prose poems, weaving through it themes of sex, music, literature, and drugs, all of which become threads that attempt to explore this concept. His emotional release onto the page is a highly poetic form reduced to potent and poignant prose that describes losing as a means of artistic creation.

Throughout Fieled's opera, he remembers past lovers and the loss of physical objects, but he continually highlights the arbitrariness of the "what" that is gone, profiting from a focus on the expression engendered by absence. Afterall, the first line of his poetic musical score reads, "Losing is the lugubriousness of Chopin." (5) By equating "losing" with an interpretation of Chopin's style he transforms the concept of absence into the great work of an infamous composer in six words. Fieled underscores the importance of what comes from the emotional reaction caused by deprivation rather than the object or feeling originally lost: "It is simply bereavement that leads us here, to these images." (16) Loss engenders these "images" that eventually lead to new thought, creating inventive juxtapositions and fresh concepts. He goes even further by drawing attention to his own creative process and his reconfiguration of mourning when he says,

What has been lost thus far? It's just tar on a highway, bound for ocean. Or, it's the migratory flight of a carrier pigeon. It is all things that move and breathe, coalesced into sound…It is octaves, repeated in a funhouse mirror until a decibel level is reached that a dog alone may hear. I am the dog that hears, the dog that conducts, the dog that puts bones on the table. (50)

In this citation, the poet refers to himself as the *ramasseur* of the fragmented pieces created by loss. He "conducts" the broken pieces into poetry to be put onto the table for the public to digest.

Furthermore, Fieled directly mentions memory, saying that it is "as sweet as reality" (59) and then relates the two of these to dreams. This statement disregards any difference between the past and the present in terms of experience and one's emotional state. His comparison to

dreams, then, links them all together through their capacity to provoke strong emotional experiences and vivid imagery. However, he separates the dream world from the others by saying, "I have learned to what extent dreams are real. They may not be solid as a cast-iron pot, but they are enough." (59) But *enough* for what exactly? Here Fieled suggests that dreams suffice as inspiration for artistic expression. A few, short lines after, he sums up this theory of creation in stating, "It is the hour of feeling, when singing must cease." (59) Here, "the hour of feeling" refers to the present, profiting from the woman he finds himself next to in order to experience the moment as the present. However, as he states himself, these privileged instances of living in the present moment exclude the possibility of creative release; during these moments, "singing must cease." In one of his other poems in which he references the power of imagination, he says, "I know that I had to dream an opera to really sing. I know I had to dream singing to really write." (54) The poet's creativity cultivated in this dream world derives directly from the concept of losing control. Once his subconscious eliminates all barriers constructed by reason or rationality, Fieled really starts to sing.

Opera Bufa bulges at the seams with drug references to describe an elimination of control. Cocaine and mescaline dispossess users of their governance over their own visual faculties, causing hallucinations and amplifying all external stimuli. This state of being induced by drugs parallels the dream state that Fieled exploits for tapping into new creativity. Drugs, however, grant extended access to this alternative existence in which one's subconscious yields to consciousness, whereas the dreamer forgoes all control involuntarily. Fieled references the prevalent drug culture of the psychedelic rock scene in San Francisco during the 1960's and 70's to infuse his poetry with this theme: "stay where shadows press themselves in upon you. Stay with the purple riders and their sage buttons." (16) This is the first drug allusion of *Opera Bufa*, and boldly opens the doors for others to follow. His mention of "purple riders" adorned with "sage buttons" points directly to the band New Riders of the Purple Sage, a country rock band that emerged from this drug and music culture of California in 1969. The term "purple riders" describes users of a mildly hallucinogenic aromatic herb found in Southern California commonly used in Native American ceremonies. Though Fieled makes this insinuation early on in his work, he picks up the thread again towards the end when Maria Callas says to him, "We are all purple riders" as she slowly exhales a ribbon of smoke. Though the author also mentions the use of cocaine, this theme of hallucinogenic drugs is more tightly weaved into his story as he openly associates it with Maria Callas, one of the narrator's inspirations, his former lover, and the woman who performs his *Opera Bufa*.

In addition, the poet dissolves boundaries signifying binary opposition to destroy conventional associations and meaning. Many images created by Fieled seem cryptic, and the reader must often wrestle the sentence into some sort of submission from which he or she can draw any digestible meaning. For example, he says things such as, "The history of popcorn is a minor third that can be squelched by intense bed-thuds," (31) or "keep your pug-face for the aesthete tax collecting slobber-heads." (28) He also tests one's logic by using such hypothetical reasoning as, "If you were a cup of finished ice cream, I'd be a brown-eyed moon-goddess." (11) These lines disorient the reader and also reflect on Fieled's own state of mind during the creation process. In describing his own style, Fieled says, "As for fluorescence, those crayons were always my favorites anyway. If the color is off, it's because my set collapsed, if not into nullity, then into plurality." (54) He tears down the blatant

contrasts separating nullity from plurality and life from death to create a space in between, seemingly void of sense and control, from which poetry and song spring forth in abundance. He says that "song cannot be spared when life and death adhere," (56) and it is within this grey space that Fieled writes. Inside this space, in which everything seems arbitrary and undeterminable, people create new connections between words and images, create new meaning, and better understand themselves.

In losing control and sacrificing reason, Fieled actually *gains* control over his own creative style and the structure of his work. The opening sentence in which he mentions Chopin establishes the poet's theme and perspective that he will tease out during the fifty-nine poems to follow. He relies heavily on the concept of absence and its multiple contributions to the creative process in the first quarter of his opera before he enters into other themes. In his first poem, Fieled says,

What's lost might be a sea shell or a tea cup or the bloody scalp of an Indian; it hardly matters. When you are lost, the heart recedes from exterior currents, too much in sync with itself, its groove vicissitudes. Each encounter, rather than revealing new rhythms, is experienced as a clangorous din, a pounding…to push the heart deeper and deeper into pitiless darkness…We squirm within ourselves to the sound of the Devil's opera bufa. (5)

He disregards what sends him into this "pitiless darkness" to focus on the experience he lives once there. Fieled plants the seed of an idea that should slowly blossom in the reader's mind through their experience with his work and returns to the original concept in his final poems. Eight poems from the end, he begins an "inventory" of what is lost, of what remains, and of what has been gained. A few poems before that, he says, "What has been lost thus far? It's just tar on a highway, bound for ocean," (50) lines that provide deeper reflection upon an idea that was similarly stated in the first lines of his work. In using this structure, Fieled has created a strong thematic foundation that circles back on itself, and he fills the middle with layers of relevant ideas, juxtaposed colors and images, and a stylized imagery presented in a simple, yet very rich and highly poetic style.

Opera Bufa outlines Adam Fieled's digestion of loss and memory that leads him into the grey space between nullity and plurality from which creation is born. His poetry explores hallucinogenic drugs, sexual promiscuity, and cryptic language play to cope with absence in a positive way. It is his artistic creation, his opera, his voice, his poetry; it is music that bleeds.

Steve Halle on "Posit": Fluid/Exchange (2007)

Adam Fieled's Posit: with an I to an I for an I

Postulation of one's own existence via tempest-in-a-teapot verse will not cut it anymore, and despite Mr. Fieled's recent posts about a new and exciting confessionalism, he wants to shake contemporary mainstream poetics to its core in his new *Dusie* chap *Posit*.

In Lewis MacAdams's book *Birth of the Cool*, MacAdams describes Paris's post WWII existentialist crowd, led by Sartre, as calling themselves "les rats," but what happens to existence and the self-as-meaning-maker when something bigger comes along? This is precisely the question taken on by Fieled in his poem "Le Chat Noir" (The Black Cat). The poem's layers allow for varied interpretations from the confessional: I smoke some pot and wander into an alley in freezing cold weather and a black cat crosses my path, oh shit; to the philosophical: I'm feeling something, I'm cold and high and surrounded by darkness (Creeley's "I Know a Man" anyone?) This feels real, but then superstition intrudes in the form of the black cat. In an existentialist reading, if they are "the rats," as the "I" of this poem seems to be, then what to do when the black cat comes along? After all, cats kill rats, right? We can make no meaning of making this meaning except to say "look a cat / a black cat le chat noir oh no" and perhaps run away, O'Hara like, from this clear and present danger. Or we can return to a quasi-literal reading of stoned speaker dreaming the 19th century Parisian bohemian cabaret *Le Chat Noir* appearing in a Philadelphian hallucination...

While I think "Le Chat Noir" the cleverest, and haply most ambiguous, poem in *Posit*, the title poem's not bad either, giving us the straightforward location of this chap in dealing with the first person:

I want
but that's
nothing new.

I posit
no boundary
between us.

Of course, the poem looks the part, shaped as it is like a giant "I," and asserting the way in which contemporary mainstream poetry attempts to connect with readers, "I say you, / I know you, / I think so," covering the I-you relationship of Rimbaud's "I is another" while leaving room for the fashionable, if nowadays heavy-handed, indeterminacy in poetry. In a closed circuit such as the I-you, the third person never gets asserted, and a real arrogance exists in believing one knows another rather than having the wisdom to call the other, other. This brand of poetry "could / go on / forever," politically and correctly asserting the I knows everything, everywhere, everyone.

But then the cats and eyes/Is also emerge in the fine poem "Eyeballs," a poem playing with the story of Oedipus, who married his mother, Jocasta, and tore out his eyes upon

discovering so. Jocasta commits suicide and therein we lay our scene of eyeballs beneath dangling feet. Jocasta's "stout / ex-maenad" maid comes upon the scene, and instead of being horrified, she pockets the eyeballs in a moment of Dionysian/Maenadian-mystery, as the lurid things resemble grapes. Then, oh no, the eyeballs become even more lurid, playthings for her cats, (perhaps they are black, the poem doesn't say). How absurd! It's easy to make some existential meaning out of that: cats don't kill rats, they play with eyeballs...I-balls. As Fieled indicates in loosely veiled lines, poet and speaker in unison, at the end of the poem, "Perhaps there is / use for everything." (the eyes, the I, this myth) "and if I am a thief, / who will accuse me?" More than a little intimation of Thomas Stearns Eliot (or T-Sizzle, as I call him) in that line, eh?

While Fieled crams a great deal of thought into a small-chap space, some of the poems disintegrate into sexual innuendo, which does not scratch my readerly itches, as it were. For example, "10:15 Saturday Night" begins with such promise, using speech-inspired, pick-up line type verse:

then like how bout we give this
thing a chance or at least not bury it
beneath a dense layer of this could
be anyone, we could be anyone,
anyone could be doing this, just
another routine, another way of
saying hello, & goodbye just
and here's where he loses me:
around the corner like a dull
dawn layered thick in creamy
clouds, ejaculations spent

The poem loses me at the end because I think I was getting to the sex anyway, more subtly from the pickup language, which gets mighty heady in transposing sex-as-physical-act for the sex-as-end-all-be-all-moment, so that I didn't need the hammer of ejaculations spent on me (pun intended, I guess). Or maybe I'm wrong, and this is why I write in the first place to use my (jungle cat-like) poet's rhetorical nimbleness to turn rock-head, jock-head pick up lines into "creamy clouds" of post-coital detritus.

All in all, Fieled's Posit is a solid read. It's lurid and surrealy entertaining enough to bring me through once and packed with enough thought-meat to keep me chewing, thinking and returning, which is ultimately what we all want from poetry.

Steve Halle on “Beams”: Fluid/Exchange (2006)

It's something all young poets talk about: how do I promote my work before a collection is published without a steady audience of poetry enthusiasts? Adam Fieled's EP "Virtual Pinball/Madame Psychosis" is as good an answer to this dilemma as I've seen in some time. Building on the success of MiPOesias and its cross publication of print verse with MP3 files of poets reading said work, Fieled's CD-R recording is memorable because the format differs from standard print poetry.

In the same way music lodges itself in one's brain, Fieled's polished and practiced reading style on this EP has the same effect, as lines become ingrained in the one's mind after several in-depth listens. It has stated been by many poets and critics that no one reads a poem better than its author, so here we get a taste of how to read not only Fieled's poetry (and his collaborations with Lars Palm) but also post-avant work in general.

As a devotee of T. S. Eliot, Fieled is highly aware of the objective correlative, and he works with language as objects to craft a specific emotion instead of being trapped by the lyric or narrative impulses of what one may call mainstream poetry. Take for example the poem "debbie jaffe," which can also be found on nth position in print format. The fun thing about "debbie jaffe" and Fieled's recent poetry in general is the poem is completely different when heard on the EP than read online. The reason for the variance is Fieled's use of similar sounding words or word patterns. In "debbie jaffe," we hear "seize her" when we listen to the poem but read "caesar" when we read it online or "urge to pull" becomes "urge, two, pull." These variances stretch the poem's depth beyond either medium.

Another aspect of these homonyms is Fieled's ability to play with the epiphanic "I." Escaping the stranglehold of the epiphanic "I" in contemporary poetics is certainly on Fieled's mind, not only in "debbie jaffe," but also in "eye eye eye," which adds further play as it doubles as a slang expression for exasperation. Fieled's reinvention of narrative allows for sexual tension or frustration in his person poems like "lizzie mclean:"

was all pot roast. hope:
that i can't hold, doll.
for you write, wrong. big.
bold. ass, a nine-volt shite.
"boners were tulips", yes,
butt, i never, have never,
buttered heads, as such,
w/ you. its' all weary
simper. i, conned, take,
your, "can't".

Fieled enhances the tension by using lots of punctuation, which serves to slow the reading of a short piece. The punctuation also gives the poem focus by forcing our attention on single words. This is true as the poem is read or heard as each word's purpose as object is set apart

while simultaneously working with the rest of the line.

The "Virtual Pinball/Madame Psychosis" EP is worth a listen. Fieled certainly undertakes important language experiments while working outside of the traditional poetry "box" we have become too accustomed to.

Brooklyn Copeland on "Chimes": Stoning the Devil (2009)

"To be perfectly honest, I was equally excited and skeptical about reading this, and I still wouldn't want to read about EVERY poet's childhood/adolescence… especially not in such literal terms. But the fact is that Adam has created a very likeable character, and it's that character (and what he chooses to reveal v. what he leaves out) that keeps you reading from one colorful burst of recollection to the next- and even forget that you're reading "poetry." Many of his subjects are immediate, from takes on fractured family life to experiences with classic rock music, but the presentation is a really comfy blend of fresh-enough perspective and common-ground heartache/insecurity/self-obsessiveness. I hate the word "poignant," but that's the one that comes to mind. You almost wonder if you've seen this character before, in a classic novella or short story- Salinger or early Roth. Or as Bud Cort in Harold and Maude. There's also something kooky and affected about the tone sometimes- almost like an imitation of an older way of talking. Like listening to old recordings of the first modernist poets. It's usually pretty endearing. Since I don't know Adam personally, I'm allowed to say something like that. It's a lovely book all-around. You can't NOT like it. The design is cool, too..."

Jeffrey Side on "Beams": Galatea Resurrects (2008)

Beams by Adam Fieled is an e-book from Blazevox. It is a multifaceted work that is both formally and typographically inventive, as well as being linguistically intriguing. To do full justice to the poetry in this volume would require a much longer and detailed review of essay length; such is the complexity and multifaceted nature of this work. So all I will attempt in this review is to isolate certain features that can be readily recognised.

Beams comprises four titled sections: 'Beams', 'Apparition Poems', 'Madame Psychoses', and 'Virtual Pinball' (this latter being composed with poet Lars Palm). Each of these sections contain poems stylistically different to those of the other sections. An important aspect to the 'Beams' section is Fieled's poetic aesthetic regarding it. The poems in it represent his concept of the poetic "beam". The following is an extract from his exposition of this poetic, which can be read at http://artrecess2.blogspot.com/2005/08/beam-hypothesis.html:
[A beam is] a short poem, 8-20 lines [not] necessarily impersonal or personal, but it must transcend mere subjectivity […] single lines interspersed function as "beams of light". They're pure shots into poetic space, flashes of imagery, insight, gist-phrasing, etc. Light-beams illuminate built-beams [ie architectural structures], built-beams support and buttress light-beams. Together, they posit the BEAM as a kind of "light-house" or "light-structure".

The manifestation of this poetic aesthetic in the 'Beams' section applies to all of its poems, but other aspects tangentially related also pertain, particularly where colour (light) and matter (objects) are made to amalgamate in such a way as to produce an almost iridescent affect which draws attention to the "variability" that underlies phenomena (according to quantum theory). The aesthetic result is that material objects are seen to display less than palpable qualities: light becomes semi-palpable in 'Creep' (p.7) were it is described as 'Sponge-light', and in 'Leaves' (p.12) matter becomes semi-iridescent:

Leaves tonight are leaning
spots of light […]

The use of such affects serves to give us a sense of the underlying subatomic volatility that forms the objects of the observed world. It has a sort of Blakean sense whereby the visible world is seen to envelop a subtler one. The world is not all it seems to be. In doing this with words, Fieled makes almost tangible to our senses what can but remain only rational inference if we are reliant on same from a study of quantum physics. No small achievement for a poet.

However, the poems are not limited to such affects. They also manage to concisely represent the vicissitudes of human experience in all their variations. In 'Razor' (p.8) we find lines such as,

edged like needle-scars along arm-veins
everything I can't puncture is there

which in association with the lines,

bottoms grow hardened from rubs
& sharpness be a baby's candy

not only produce an interesting juxtaposition, but also represent birth and death. They suggest the bitterness, regret, and frustration that is the lot of humanity, yet they also suggest hope in that we become hardened in order for that suffering to become almost as acceptable to us as candy is to a baby.

Throughout this collection, a recurring motif relating to sexual struggle is evident. In 'Sex Hex' (p.9) we have a deft account of man's unremitting desire for sexual fulfilment described in almost "biological determinist" terms, yet alluding to the nuances inherent in any discussion of male dominance within a given society, as is suggested by the mention of Foucault:

take her up, stroke her belly
she'll think of Foucault

The biological controlling impulses of the male driven to physical action is counter-balanced by the cerebral passivity of the female who, by thinking of Foucault, both gives in to the male's seduction ploy but also demonstrates an intellectuality that is not evident in the male at this particular moment in their relationship.

The problematical relationship between the sexes is further evinced in terms of consciousness in the 'Madame Psychoses' section. In 'Sarah Israel' (p.33) we see how memory almost reinvents or remodels the past regarding a yearned for "other":

I saw her in a seeing not seen by any eye,
& the "I" that saw, saw my eye not at all.

Here, identity and perception become entwined as the punning of 'eye' with 'I' demonstrates. This punning acts as a poetic device to illustrate the very real inextricable union that identity and perception must necessarily have. It is a union so binding that the two become mutually exclusive causing the poet confusion as he struggles to wade his way through something of solipsist maze. In 'Paula' (p.37) we see the ultimate expression of male sexual and emotional yearning that represents the lot of Everyman:

chaos, order, clipped bird-like into
wings & cries. I could only ever
think; paula. all the thrusts &
pumps that could never be. "all"
that must be withheld, & that
it might be better that way.

you gave me the gift; savouring
wanting. how it really was you
I wanted. not a body but a soul.

I tell myself I've "been through
you", forever & never. zero here,
same as two. empty.saturated. dark

I have quoted the entire poem. Such is its universality pertaining to male desire any commentary by me would be more than superfluous. Indeed, it would not be outlandish to suggest that in this poem Fieled has articulated more than John Donne allowed himself to in those poems of Donne's that evince similar concerns.

John Bloomberg-Rissman on "Three Sets of Teeth" from "When You Bit…": Galatea Resurrects (2012)

I chose this poem for three reasons:

1) First poem in the book;

2) Since the title of the book is *When you bit* …, a poem with teeth in the title seemed appropriate;

3) I used to know a guy with two sets of teeth. So the title resonated.

The poem's a sonnet; this is a book of sonnets. It's a very musical sonnet. There are end-rhymes, rhymes mid-line, near/off rhymes, and other kinds of musics, too. So it's quite possible to read this poem on a sonic level, which smoothes out the "argument", so to speak. I'm at the end before you know it. Without realizing I've just passed thru a series of complexities …

Tho that's not quite true. At one point, the music is quite harshly consonantal, which stops me dead in my tracks: "that cuts. We are sluts." That initial c … those following t's … not to mention the guttural rhyme … Something is going on here. I should pause over it. So let's go back, a little more slowly this time.

"Three Sets of Teeth. / / Three sets of teeth: who / can check for cavities?" As noted above, when I read this title I thought of the guy with two sets of teeth and wondered whether someone had three. There's nothing in these first two lines to suggest otherwise. In fact, "who / can check for cavities?" had me picturing an incredibly crowded mouth and a really tripped-out dentist. The next two-three lines (remember, this is my 2nd time thru …) disabuse me that we're talking about one mouth here. Which leaves me puzzling over "who / can check for cavities?" Once I realize that three mouths are involved, the crazed dentist image disappears. Which leaves me with the possibility that we're dealing with a pun on "cavities", and perhaps the first thoughts of the love-fest to come.

"A three-way circuit: who / will start the striptease?" Erotic tension, with a decision to act upon it. But it is a little nerve-wracking to get these things going. Someone has to unbutton the first button.

"Three lovers in three ways: / how merrily the dance / begins. We spin, we spin," Apparently the first (and last) buttons are undone and the loving begins. With great joy and pleasure, apparently. "Three lovers in three ways" is an interesting locution; it could indicate any number of things, e.g., the relationships between the three differ; each lover has hir own kinks; the positions (and "cavities") vary; or it could simply mean that this is a three-way. Or any number of other things, none of which are specified.

"we forget our instincts, / anima, the part of teeth / that cuts." Uh, oh, trouble in Paradise. I'm not sure exactly what has gone wrong. Has jealousy arisen (is it considered here as an

instinct?) Or, if not jealousy, some other problem?

(I google "anima sex" and google gives me "animal sex", and "anime sex" which I'm sure – which I have no doubt – are interesting, but they don't seem particularly apposite here …).

Anyway.

In Jungian psychology, the anima is the feminine within the male (that little yin dot within the yang). According to Wikipedia,

Jung believed anima development has four distinct levels, which he named *Eve, Helen, Mary and Sophia*. In broad terms, the entire process of anima development in a male is about the male subject opening up to emotionality, and in that way a broader spirituality, by creating a new conscious paradigm that includes intuitive processes, creativity and imagination, and psychic sensitivity towards himself and others where it might not have existed previously.

It seems possible that insufficient development of the anima has rendered some aspect of this three-way problematic. But it's impossible to tell what has gone wrong, exactly. All we know is that, however wonderful the dance, at a certain point it ends up with

"We are sluts." I don't quite know how instinct, anima, and "the part of teeth / that cuts" has led to this conclusion. After all, feeling like a slut is an internalization of culture, not of instinct, etc.

Unless. Unless. Unless there is NO trouble in paradise, and the forgetting of instinct, anima, etc somehow leads one to triumph in one's sluttishness. Tho I have to admit that I don't know how that happens, either.

"There is an "I" here that / stands for all of us, but / its eyes are shut. Sleep / lulls it to rest, not think. Or speak." Is the "I" that stands for all of us the Jungian unconscious? I don't know, I don't want to read too much into the single word "anima". "[A]ll of us" could simply mean the three participants, who have been satisfied into unconsciousness. Unconsciousness that is utterly silent, utterly without need for self-expression, dead to the world, inside and out. That's one hell of a fine satisfaction.

The depth of the sleep leads me to favor the interpretation of the sluts bit given two paragraphs above. But somehow the fact that the "shut" eyes have to do with "cuts" and "sluts" still troubles me, since I don't have a solid reading of that bit. Perhaps it's not an either/or; it could be a both/and.

Desmond Swords on "Apparition Poems": UK List-Serve (2010)

Bob Sheppard's Star Student Scott Desmond's Words Flyte Fielded.

Yes, yes, one read the pose by this 'poet, critic, and musician' colleague, currently where erm, you were a year ago, nearing the end of that long hard road to attainment as a pro in doctoral po-biz, Jeff - collegiately alleging a claim that nearly everything to follow Four Quartets has been 'dross'.

One chuckled at the ambition, audacity and foolishness of deploying such a term in the forum of Letters; before turning one's focus to adducing the verse and other critical prose assays by the author Adam attempting to pull off such a theatrically audacious play as this.

"She told me I love boy/girl poems, love
scenes in them based on a deep degeneracy
inherited from too much heat around my
genitals, as manifest in tangents I could only
see if I was getting laid. She told me this as
I was getting laid in such a way that any notion

of telling was subsumed in an ass as stately as
a mansion, which I filled with the liquid
cobwebs of my imagination."

Yeats would be proud of the cant and ergo argoist, very very classy Adam Fieled's verse. Proper spillage. High Art indeed from our playboy crown-prince doing what one does.

Effecting agreement among this reader, on X and Y being the only two one is on collegiate amity and perfect accord with Adam about, as a bosom buddy chum and prophetical practitoner with the imbas to know why, when, what and how, for example, Eliot can successfully operate as a symbol for agreement between Fieled and oneself.

High and Low Art in the 'making' of verse activity, you know, as a 'poetry' - there's often very little agreement about, and in America, poetry atomised into 10,000 different individual, unique and original practices, all curated by a genius with big ideas about what kind of reality Poetry is, adam, the only critical debate in AmPo parish at present, as you know, has one essential point of agreement most practitioners of contemporary American poetry found as your datum: MFA.

After this, a forking occurs and we diverge into our own pool of plod and production sailor, not believing any of it matters. That our thinking is nought but a performance in print, anything other than that: Not real. Thought, Fielding.

Have a think about it. I'll get back to you.